

Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

Even in this uncertain world there is one thing of which we can always be sure, and that is growing old. It happens to all—rich and poor, strong and weak, beautiful or damned—and the best that anyone can hope for is to grow old gracefully.

The other night television departed briefly from its thesis of Eternal Youth to present a 90-minute drama about the anguish of old age and its impact on a man and his family called "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night."

Its title was taken from a poem by Dylan Thomas about the approaching death of his father. The poem as well as Loring Mandel's play is a plea to humanity everywhere not to surrender meekly to the inevitable end but to struggle against it with fortitude.

The drama was not offered as "escape" entertainment. It was a thoughtful experience that will not easily be forgotten. Suitable for viewers of all ages—because it touched upon a dilemma facing every family—it may not have been comfortable viewing for somewhere in the drama it seemed to reach out and touch each of us. It may have depressed some; others might have felt ashamed. The director of Douglas's "rest home" provided a comment on such places that is chilling.

There were many small roles, including one played by Shirley Booth, but the evening belonged entirely to Melvyn Douglas as a widowed carpenter who worked with his hands skillfully and honorably all his life, yet who seemed to have outlived his usefulness as a vital part of the family circle. Torn between feelings of love and guilt, his children placed him in a home for the elderly. The drama told his story of growing rebellion at being treated as if he were crippled or senile and of his decision to live bravely rather than sit and wait for death.

Poets before Thomas have spoken eloquently of advancing years. One that stands out in my memory is "The Death of the Hired Man" by Robert Frost. It told of Silas, who died still clinging to a

instead of today's flying nuns and the vinyl heroes of violent fantasies.

DOUGLAS was excellent, as he always has been, from the Thirties when he was the polished leading man of every major Hollywood star, including Greta Garbo, up to his recent portrayals in "Inherit the Wind" and "The Crucible."

Playwright Mandel earned his first TV credit in 1955 with a script for "Studio One" and later went on to write for many dramatic series, including "Playhouse 90." The play was produced and directed by George Schaefer, the man responsible for

NBC's distinguished "Hallmark of Fame" series.

"Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" was the first production of the season in the drama series "CBS Playhouse," which opened last January with "The Final War of Ollie Winter." The next will be "Dear Friends," also an original contemporary drama, written by Reginald Rose, starring Rosemary Harris, Anne Jackson, and James Daly, scheduled for next year.

In addition to its interest for the older audience, this drama might well have concerned the younger set, who had better start learning about the problems of old age right now, because, with the

Petitions For Walks Ordered

Adoption of an order by the Board of Supervisors to circulate a petition for construction of sidewalk and driveway aprons on 223rd Street in the Carson area was reported today by Supervisor Burton W. Chace.

The area to be improved on 223rd Street is from Catskill Avenue to Anchor Avenue, Chace said.

Chace said the petition was prepared at the request of local property owners. This policy for new alley and road improvements (under the State Highway Improvement Act of 1911 if the Streets and Highway Code) was adopted by the board in August of this year, it was noted.

School Health

Mrs. Dorothy Anderson, supervising nurse for the Torrance Unified School District, will attend the California School Health Association annual conference in Fresno Nov. 3 through 5.

At yesterday's meeting, the board also agreed to consider the petition or portions of it when signed by the property owners representing 60 percent of the front footage of any or all of the blocks within the limits of the proposed project.

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